

MGF 009-81

5 July 1981

Memorandum for: Director, FBIS

Through : Chief, Operations Group

Subject : Monthly Report--Gulf Bureau--June 1981

I. GENERAL

A highlight of the month was the marriage of editor [redacted] On 18 June, [redacted] were married in a quiet ceremony in Awali. A gala pool-side reception was held following the ceremony at the U.S. Navy's Administrative Support Unit here in Manama. STAT

Persian monitor [redacted] completed re-documentation travel to the United Kingdom at mid-month and returned to Bahrain after a 2-month absence. While in the UK [redacted] worked with the BBC at Caversham. He learned a great deal and has been able to impart some of his new knowledge to his colleagues here at Gulf bureau. STAT

With the arrival of Farsi/Dari/Pashto/Urdu monitor [redacted] in late May we were finally able to realign our Urdu-language coverage and rationalize our staffing to cover the commitment. As a result, part-time Urdu monitor [redacted] and his full-time monitor wife, who had been on LWOP since last October following the birth of the [redacted] first child, were released. The [redacted] performed well for the bureau during a very formative stage of our growth and we were sorry to see them go. STAT

A No Objection Certificate has been issued for our Russian/Arabic candidate and we hope to have him on board by late July. In addition, an Armenian candidate and her Arabic-speaking sister passed their language tests and interviews. We are now awaiting NOC's for them. Hopefully they will be able to EOD by late August. If all goes well, we should have 13-14 monitors on duty by Labor Day with language capabilities in Arabic, Farsi, Dari, Pashto, Urdu, Punjabi, Russian, Azeri, Uzbek, Armenian and Turkish. Happily, many of our new monitors are trilingual or quadrilingual.

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II. OPERATIONS

A. Editorial/Monitorial

1. The bureau began filing Paris AFP English material during the month dealing with Gulf-area countries, including Iraq and Iran. We are currently covering the service from 0600-1700 GMT daily. After 1700 GMT, AFP changes frequencies and our reception deteriorates. The assumption of this coverage, however, has been a welcome move, providing the bureau with coverage that is not only timely and informative, but highly productive. The coverage has fitted in well with the bureau's other Arabic and Persian coverage, particularly the latter.

2. The bureau assumed full time coverage of the Moscow Persian 1100 and 1630 GMT casts late in the month, finally bringing to an end the split coverage arrangement we have had with Nicosia bureau.

3. Following the Israeli raid on the Iraqi nuclear reactor early in the month, the Bureau put Baghdad Domestic Service on open-speaker watch after Jordan bureau reported that it couldn't hear the radio. As a result, we continued to provide an open-speaker watch on the radio during our 0400-2030 GMT business day, for the next several days, but Jordan bureau was able to cover the radio sufficiently well to monitor all important material. The incident, however, was a useful learning experience for our Arabic monitors.

4. Late in the month our Persian monitors intercepted a live relay of proceedings of the Iranian Majlis. The relay is carried on 990 khz and is heard here with good reception. We are currently filing editorial reports on each day's session.

5. In an attempt to provide a better picture of the type of programming carried on the Iranian regionals, the bureau instituted a cruising project in which regional stations were recorded throughout the bureau's entire work day between 0400-2030 GMT. The recordings were then checked and cruising messages on programming content were filed.

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6. Throughout the month the bureau continued to provide periodic backstop assistance to the BBC in covering Tehran Domestic Services when reception at Caversham deteriorated.

B. Technical

The bureau finally took delivery of the long-awaited microwave equipment shipped from Paraguay bureau. Dishes have been installed at the Embassy and at the bureau and preliminary equipment installations have been completed. We are currently awaiting delivery of connecting cable from headquarters to complete the installation.

Upon receipt from headquarters, we erected a new "deep fringe" TV antenna during the month. We had optimistically hoped for some improvement in our reception of Tehran Domestic television transmissions, but to no avail. We continue to make daily checks, but it is now clear that until the repeater station at Abadan is rebuilt or a new one constructed in the southern part of the country close to the Gulf area we will not be able to monitor Tehran TV transmissions. However, our reception of the "Leave It to Beaver" series carried by Aramco TV beamed from Dhaharan, Saudi Arabia is excellent.

III. ADMINISTRATION

We are all beginning to wonder when it will end inasmuch as our communications section has been hard hit by maternity absences over the last year. However, once again the happy event has become apparent and the countdown started toward the fourth birth among five teletypists within the last 10 months. Since we would be hard pressed to absorb further absences, we are quietly encouraging hand-holding as an expression of endearment. ?

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Bureau Chief